

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5638

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN, PINT, IT
SUBJECT: CONSULAR VISIT TO MARCHE REGION

REF: ROME 10668, ROME'S A-223

1. SUMMARY. FROM JUNE 1 THROUGH JUNE 4 AN EMBOFF
TRAVELED THROUGH THE MARCHE REGION PAYING COURTESY CALLS
ON THE PRESIDENT OF THE REGION IN ACONA AS WELL AS ON
THE PREFECTS AND ELECTED PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL
OFFICIALS IN THE REGION'S FOUR PROVINCIAL CAPITALS
OF ANCONA, ASCOLI PICENO, MACERATA AND PESARO. THE
MARCHE IS A RATHER QUIET AND UNDISTURBED REGION
BORDERING THE ADRIATIC COAST. ITS POPULATION OF UNDER
ONE AND A HALF MILLION IS SPREAD AMONG APPROXIMATELY
300 MUNICIPALITIES ONLY TWO OF WHICH, ANCONA AND PESARO
(WITH POPULATIONS OF 108,000 AND 89,000 RESPECTIVELY),
EXCEED 50,000 INHABITANTS. UP TO PRESENT TIME,
PROBLEMS OF LAW AND ORDER, UNEMPLOYMENT, YOUTH AND
THE LIKE WHICH AFFECT OTHER PARTS OF ITALY HAVE BEEN
LITTLE FELT IN THE MARCHE. END SUMMARY.

2. MARCHE REGION IS TRANQUIL WITH REGARD TO LAW AND
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ORDER. ALTHOUGH THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT VIOLENCE IN THE
LARGE CITIES, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE PREFECTS, THERE
HAS BEEN ALMOST NO IMPACT IN THE AREA. A SHOOTOUT THAT
OCCURRED TWO MONTHS AGO IN CIVITANOVA MARCHE IN WHICH
TWO CARABINIERI LOST THEIR LIVES CREATED QUITE A STIR
BUT THE CRIMINALS INVOLVED DID NOT COME FROM THE
MARCHE REGION. WHAT LITTLE CRIME OCCURS APPEARS TO

BE "IMPORTED" -- THAT IS, CRIMINAL ELEMENTS WHO TAKE REFUGE IN THE AREA. AT THE REQUEST OF QUESTORE OF MACERATA, CONOFF MET WITH THIS OFFICIAL WHO PROVIDED AN INTERESTING INSIGHT INTO WHAT MAY BE THE CONCERNS OF HIGHER POLICE OFFICIALS. ALTHOUGH THE QUESTORE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE VIOLENT CLIMATE IN THE LARGE CITIES WOULD GET MUCH WORSE SINCE THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION WAS BECOMING MORE CONSERVATIVE AND WISHED TO PROTECT WHAT IT HAD GAINED ECONOMICALLY, HE SEES PRESENT SITUATION CONTINUING FOR QUITE A WHILE. HE VIEWS ITALY AS A DEMOCRATIC, INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRY WITH A LATIN AMERICAN TYPE POLITICAL CLASS. AS A RESULT SERIOUS BUFFETING OF ITALY'S SOCIAL FABRIC HAS OCCURRED AND WILL CONTINUE BUT ITALY'S BASIC STABILITY SHOULD NOT BE AFFECTED. QUESTORE STATED THAT HE SEES NO NEED FOR "FERMO DI POLIZIA" BUT LAMENTED FACT THAT POLICE IN ITALY NO LONGER HAVE THE ESSENTIAL RIGHT TO QUESTION SUSPECTS AND PURSUE AN INVESTIGATION A LA MAIGRET. LATITUDE NOW ALLOWED TO POLICE DEPENDS ENTIRELY UPON WHIMS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL INVESTIGATING JUDGE OR PROSECUTOR AND HIS POLITICAL VIEW REGARDING A PARTICULAR CRIME OR CASE. HE DECRIED FACT THAT JUDICIARY HAS BECOME FULLY POLITICIZED AND THAT THIS IS NOW BECOMING TRUE OF THE POLICE. HE IS OPPOSED TO UNIONIZATION OF POLICE AND MENTIONED THAT 90 PERCENT OF HIS MEN HAVE JOINED C.G.I.L.

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3. ECONOMICALLY, REGION APPEARS TO BE HOLDING ITS OWN WITH EMPLOYMENT DERIVED FROM LIGHT INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM. PESARO DEPENDS, FOR EXAMPLE, UPON FURNITURE MAKING WHICH IS DONE BY HAND IN SMALL COMPANIES. AS THEIR PRODUCTS ARE NOT MASS PRODUCED, QUALITY IS GOOD AND PRICE WITHIN REASON, THESE COMPANIES STILL HAVE ENOUGH ORDERS TO KEEP THEM BUSY. MOTORCYCLES (BENELLI) ARE ALSO MADE IN THE AREA. SHOE MANUFACTURING IS ALSO IMPORTANT FACTOR AND SOME CONCERN WAS MENTIONED REGARDING POSSIBILITY THAT U.S. MIGHT IMPOSE IMPORT QUOTAS. IN SOUTHERN PART OF THE MARCHE, WINE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ECONOMIC ROLE AND EXPORT OF VERDICCHIO (PARTICULARLY UNDER FAZZI BATTAGLIA LABEL) TO THE UNITED STATES HAS SUPPOSEDLY REACHED 40 PERCENT OF PRODUCTION. ANCONA REMAINS FAIRLY IMPORTANT PORT ESPECIALLY WITH ITS FERRY CONNECTIONS TO YUGOSLAVIA. THE PORT AND SHIPYARDS WHICH WERE DAMAGED IN 1972 EARTHQUAKES ARE ALMOST BACK IN FULL GEAR, AND MAYOR OF ANCONA STATED THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN QUITE HELPFUL WITH ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO REBUILD. ALTHOUGH NOT AS WELL KNOWN AS THE AREAS OF RIMINI AND

RICCIONE FURTHER NORTH, COASTAL CITIES AND TOWNS OF THE MARCHE HAVE DEVELOPED THEIR TOURIST INDUSTRY WITH PESARO, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVING 135 HOTELS AND PENSIONES IN OPERATION.

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4. THE MARCHE REGION IS GOVERNED BY A CENTER-LEFT GIUNTA (DC-PSI-PSDI-PRI) AND THE REGIONAL COUNCIL IS COMPOSED OF 16 DC-4 PSI-2 PSDI-1 PRI-15 PCI-1 SIN. INDI. AND 1 MSI-DN TOTALING 40 MEMBERS. PRESIDENT OF REGIONAL COUNCIL IS PCI AND PRESIDENT OF REGIONAL GIUNTA IS DC. PROVINCES OF ANCONA, ASCOLI PICENO AND PESARO HAVE FRONTIST GIUNTE WHILE MACERATA HAS CENTER-LEFT CIUNTA. MAYOR OF PESS ONLY PCI ELECTED OFFICIAL AMONG THOSE VISITED BY CONOFF.

5. CONOFF SPOKE WITH REGIONAL GIUNTA PRESIDENT ADRIANO CIAFFI (DC) AND PESARO PROVINCE GIUNTA PRESIDENT SALVATO VERGARI (PSI) REGARDING VIABILITY OF REGIONAL CONCEPT. CIAFFI SUPPORTS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REGIONS VIEWING THEM AND THE DEVELOPING SYSTEM OF "COMPRESORI" (INTER-COMMUNAL ASSOCIATIONS) AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO AVOID COLLAPSE AT THE TOP. THIS NEW POLITICAL FRAMEWORK SHOULD GIVE A GREAT CHANCE FOR THE HOMOGENEOUS NATURE OF ITALIAN SOCIETY TO GIVE VENT TO ITS VARIOUS POLITICAL CURRENTS. VERGARI, WHILE OPTIMISTIC AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE REGIONS, NOTED THAT IT WAS TOO SOON TO JUDGE THEIR SUCCESS. HE STRESSED THAT THE REGIONS HAD NOT YET BEEN FULLY FUNDED AND
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UNDERLINED TWO BASIC PROBLEMS AT THE PRESENT TIME. THE REGIONS, WHICH WERE SUPPOSED TO LEGISLATE ONLY, IMMEDIATELY STARTED TO ATTEMPT TO GOVERN. PART AND PARCEL OF THIS IS THE GROWTH OF A NEW BUREAUCRACY WHICH IS THE LAST THING NEEDED AT THE PRESENT TIME. INTERESTINGLY, NEITHER VERGARI NOR HIS PCI VICE PRESIDENT WERE ABLE TO OFFER ANY SOLUTIONS TO ITALY'S BUREAUCRACY WHICH THEY BOTH DECRIED.

6. CONOFF WAS WARMLY RECEIVED THROUGHOUT TRIP AND THERE WAS PHOTO COVERAGE OF MEETINGS WITH ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS EXCEPT WITH PCI MAYOR OF PESARO. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND LOCAL PAPERS CARRIED REPORTS OF CONOFF'S TRIP.

7. COMMENT. REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL PERSUASION (INCLUDING PCI PESARO MAYOR), CONOFF HEARD REQUEST FROM ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR GREATER CULTURAL CO-OPERATION WHETHER THIS BE LECTURES, FILMS, CONCERTS, ASSISTANCE IN SETTING UP TWIN-CITY ARRANGEMENTS, ETC. SPECIFICALLY, MAYOR OF PESARO NOTED THAT HIS CITY HAS ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL AND MACERATA'S MAYOR MENTIONED THEIR ANNUAL MUSIC FESTIVAL NOW IN ITS 13TH YEAR. MAYOR OF ASCOLI PICENO EXPRESSED HOPE TO SOON INVITE AMBASSADOR FOR A VISIT. END COMMENT. GARDNER

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